

Introduced by Senator TorlaksonFebruary 16, 2005

An act to add Section 87 to the Streets and Highways Code, relating to transportation.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 275, as introduced, Torlakson. Transportation needs assessment.

Existing law creates the California Transportation Commission and makes it responsible for programming and allocating funds for the construction of transportation projects in the state.

This bill would require the commission, working with the Department of Transportation, to submit before June 30, 2006, a 10-year needs assessment to the Legislature on the state's transportation system.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares the
- 2 following:
- 3 (a) California has 15,234 miles of state highways, 71,151
- 4 miles of city streets, 65,872 miles of county roads, and 12,364
- 5 state-owned bridges and other structures.
- 6 (b) More than 95 percent of these roadways are over 20 years
- 7 old and require significant maintenance and rehabilitation to keep
- 8 them in safe condition and prevent accidents and damage to
- 9 vehicles.

(c) Combined, these factors result in California being unable to keep up with the maintenance and rehabilitation needs of its transportation system, and the state has virtually no additional money available to address California's ever-growing traffic congestion problems. In December 2004, the California Transportation Commission's annual report to the Legislature stated that "California's transportation program is in crisis and on the verge of collapse."

(d) Because of inflation and increased fuel economy in value per vehicle mile traveled, the purchasing power of California's fuel tax, currently at 18 cents (\$0.18) per gallon, is only 40 percent of its power in the 1970's when the tax was seven cents (\$0.07) per gallon.

(e) At the same time that the purchasing power of the fuel tax has decreased, California has, due to this and other factors, been unable to keep pace with the need to expand the capacity of its roadway system. In the last 20 years, the state's population has increased by 50 percent, and vehicle miles traveled have increased by 100 percent, but the capacity of the roadway system has only increased by 8 percent.

(f) There are many parts of the state where due to the intensity of development and the size of the freeway systems already created, no reasonable method exists to expand the capacity of the roadway system to accommodate increased traffic. In these areas, the only way to mitigate increased traffic congestion is through alternative transportation mobility options, such as public transportation and other ways that provide people with alternative transportation methods to private vehicles.

(g) It is in the best interests of the people of the State of California for an assessment to be prepared of the state's transportation system.

SEC. 2. Section 87 is added to the Streets and Highways Code, to read:

87. (a) Notwithstanding Section 7550.5 of the Government Code, the commission, working with the department and the state's regional transportation planning agencies, shall produce and submit before June 30, 2006, to the Senate Committee on Transportation and to the President pro Tempore of the Senate, a 10-year needs assessment of the state's transportation system.

(b) The assessment shall include all of the following:

1 (1) The unfunded rehabilitation and operations needs for the
2 state highway system and local streets and roads for the state's
3 intercity rail programs, and for urban, commuter, and regional
4 transit systems, including ferry systems, over the next 10 years.

5 (2) High-priority projects that are expected to reduce
6 congestion and provide economic and environmental benefits to
7 the state that should be advanced for completion as expeditiously
8 as possible.

9 (3) A workload projection and staffing estimate necessary for
10 the department to perform the project support work required to
11 complete the projects contained in the assessment.

12 (4) Measures to be instituted by the department to ensure that
13 the projects contained in the assessment can be delivered in a
14 timely and cost-effective manner.